



Gordon FUNG Ping-chung 馮秉仲 (b. 1933.8.15)

Distributor, Theatre Owner, Producer

Born and raised in Hong Kong, Fung learned the theatre business at an early age. His father Fung Ching had distributed films and ran his own theatres such as Loong Shing, Paramount and Victoria since the end of the war. After graduating from school in 1957, Fung worked briefly in a bank until the early 1960s when he switched careers to work at Lung Wah Theatre. Within half a year, he was promoted to manager and went on to manage Waldorf Theatre, Grand Theatre and Yau Ma Tei Theatre.

In 1969, Fung established Variety Entertainment Company Limited, and while managing the Park Theatre, he initiated the switch from screening Chinese films to Western films in September 1971. He was also responsible for Park Theatre's partnership with Ocean Theatre to become the local stronghold for Western film distribution. Lung Wah Theatre was a long-term partnership with Shaw & Sons Cinema Circuit until 1977, when Shaw & Sons Cinema Circuit collaborated with Golden Harvest to form the Gala Cinema Circuit. In 1978, Fung responded by grouping with nine theatres (including Forever Star Theatre, Fox Theatre, Tung Lok Theatre, Yau Ma Tei Theatre and Metropol Theatre) to form the Forever Star-Fox Cinema Circuit. The circuit frequently linked up with Lawrence Louey's Royal-Imperial Cinema Circuit to screen Hong Kong and Taiwan productions. Their partnership stabilised after collaborating to screen *Enter the Fat Dragon* in July 1978. Later, Forever Star-Fox and Royal-Imperial were combined to form the Golden Princess Cinema Circuit (aka the Royal Cinema Circuit). In 1980, Golden Princess started to invest in Cinema City productions and arranged them to screen at its theatres. Fung also invested in independent production studios such as Always Good Film Co. Ltd. and Magnum Films Ltd. Furthermore, he set up a distribution network in North America by establishing cinema circuits in cities such as New York, San Francisco and Vancouver. About 80% of Hong Kong films were distributed by his company in these regions.

In 1984, Fung supported the establishment of Tsui Hark's Film Workshop and the company's debut production *Shanghai Blues*. In January 1988, he went on to partner with theatre owner Chan Wing-mei to form Newport Cinema Circuit. In 1992, following the death of Lawrence Louey, Golden Princess ended its operation; in January 1993, Newport retracted the cinemas under Golden Princess Circuit and regrouped as Empire Theatrical Circuit.